



King County

Department of Transportation

Community Relations and Communications Section

KSC-TR-0824

201 South Jackson Street

Seattle, WA 98104-3856

November 18, 2008

The Honorable Julia Patterson, Chair
Metropolitan King County Council
Room 1200
King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Councilmember Patterson,

The Transit Advisory Committee has carefully considered proposed solutions to the current budget shortfall facing King County Metro Transit in the 2008/2009 biennium. The purpose of this letter is to express our support for Executive Ron Sims' transit budget proposal.

Specifically, we are concerned about the council's approach that would demand further unidentified reductions in operating expenditures, in addition to the reductions already proposed by the Executive, while prohibiting changes to currently scheduled or planned number of service hours. We understand that budget cuts are necessary, and all parties would naturally prefer to preserve service. King County Metro Transit must, however, be given the authority to target those cuts where they will have the least impact on the transit agency and the community it serves. Many of the expenditures that do not directly deliver transit services are nevertheless essential to the future of public transportation in our region. We ask you to leave decisions about specific cuts in the operations budget up to Metro's leadership.

Additionally, we do not want to see the use of cash reserves ruled out during this budgetary crisis. Reserve funds are set aside precisely because of possible economic downturns and operating cost increases such as those we are experiencing. Responsible management strategies may require use of cash reserves until additional revenue sources are secured.

Sincerely,

Ed Miller, Chair
King County Transit Advisory Committee

Cc Executive Ron Sims
 Members, King County Council
 Arthur Thornbury, Council Senior Legislative Analyst
 Harold Taniguchi, Director, King County Department of Transportation
 Laurie Brown, Deputy Director, King County Department of Transportation
 Kevin Desmond, King County Metro Transit Division General Manager
 Jim Jacobson, King County Metro Transit Division Deputy General Manager
 Betty Gullledge-Bennett, Manager, KCDOT Community Relations

